

2024
ANNUAL
REPORT

Sites Project Authority



A MESSAGE FROM THE SITES PROJECT AUTHORITY

2024 marked the start of a new chapter for the Sites Reservoir Project with several major milestones that moved the Sites Reservoir Project closer to final design and construction. We successfully defended legal challenges to the environmental review process, with courts ruling that the Final Environmental Impact Report (EIR) fully complies with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). We made advancements in the Sites Reservoir Project's permitting process with the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) issuing the Incidental Take Permits required for construction and operation of the reservoir, and the State Water Resources Control Board beginning proceedings to consider our Water Right permit. We also began preparing for the next phase of the Sites Reservoir Project by initiating our first land purchase of property west of Maxwell and launching the selection process for a Construction Manager at Risk (CMAR) contractor for the Dams and Reservoir package, which marks a critical step toward construction.

Our progress comes at a time when water storage is needed more than ever in California. In early 2024, Northern California experienced a series of atmospheric rivers that marked the close of yet another wet year. Our real-time modeling showed that if Sites Reservoir was already operational, it would have been 80% full after large storms in January and February and 100% full by the end of the 2023-2024 wet season in April. We continue to see how well Sites Reservoir will perform during wet years, and how much it's needed to capture and store water for dry years.

This need is also reflected in the growing support for Sites Reservoir. Last year, 16 agencies across California expressed interest in participation and were placed on the waitlist, which reflects the broad support that has been a hallmark of the Sites Reservoir Project. Our state and federal partners continue to invest in Sites Reservoir, with more than \$273M in federal funding secured in 2024, bringing the total to approximately \$517M at the close of the year. This broad and diverse support underscores the significant benefits the Sites Reservoir Project will provide to our communities, farms, and environment.

In 2025, we will work toward our next big milestones—selecting a CMAR contractor, moving from design to construction, securing additional real estate acquisitions, and obtaining our Water Right permit. With each milestone, we move one step closer to delivering a 21st century reservoir that provides water reliability, flexibility, and resiliency for generations to come.

Thank you for your continued support.

Fritz Durst
Fritz Durst
CHAIRMAN,
Sites Project Authority Board of Directors

Valerie Pryor
Valerie Pryor
CHAIRWOMAN,
Sites Reservoir Committee

TRANSITIONING TOWARD CONSTRUCTION

NOW

The Sites Project Authority has stayed true to its strategic plan and delivered results

Sites Reservoir is Permittable

Now: The Sites Project Authority received major state biological permits to construct and operate Sites Reservoir.

Next: Receive a water right, which is the remaining step to secure Sites Reservoir benefits.

Sites Reservoir has an Effective Organization

Now: Participants and the Sites Project Authority are united in the common goal of creating a more secure water future through Sites Reservoir.

Next: Finalize and sign the agreements that will cement this generational partnership for a century.

Sites Reservoir is Buildable

Now: The Sites Project Authority designed a reliable and safe project and understands the cost and schedule.

Next: Engage the right contractors and keep the local community involved in key decisions.

Sites Reservoir is Affordable

Now: The Sites Project Authority has a plan to finance the Sites Reservoir Project with a flexible Water Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (WIFIA) loan and increasing contributions from the state and federal governments that will keep the project affordable for Participants.

Next: Each Participant will decide how the project fits into their future needs and budgets.

NEXT

Sites Reservoir is Ready for Construction

Breaking ground is a significant milestone—a big hill to crest on our journey to a more secure water future.

A Better Future

Sites Reservoir is a generational opportunity to create a sustainable water solution.

CONSTRUCTING A BETTER FUTURE

Embarking on the next part of the journey, together

The end of 2024 marks a pivotal time for Sites Reservoir. The Sites Reservoir Project is nearly ready for construction due to the enduring commitment of every Participant—each seeing Sites Reservoir as an investment that will provide a secure water future for generations to come.

A VISION OF A BETTER FUTURE

Shaped by shared values, Sites Reservoir represents so much more than water storage.

It's a project driven by a commitment to community, affordability, collaboration, and opportunity.

Community

HUMBLE

As a result of growing from humble roots, the success of Sites Reservoir depends on the unwavering support from the local people and community. It is their continuous encouragement and dedication that propels the Sites Project forward and reinforces the Sites Project Authority's efforts, which enables us to achieve our goals.

LOCALLY LED

Sites Reservoir remains a viable project because it is locally led and because it fits into the values and ideals of the people it will serve. Sites Reservoir has a long history that is woven into the identity of the local community. The Sites Project Authority, in partnership with local communities, has shaped Sites Reservoir into a project that will honor the principles of the community.

Affordability

COST EFFECTIVE

Sites is an accumulation of years of research on cost-effective technologies that will be a long-term asset. The initial cost to build a water solution of this magnitude is substantial, but Sites Reservoir offers more than the sum of planning, construction, and operation costs and will be increasingly cost effective over time.

ECONOMICAL

Everyone is hit with rising costs and inflation, but Sites Reservoir remains the smartest option. The initial commitment to participate in Sites Reservoir can be intimidating, but no one is making this commitment alone. With state and federal funding and the commitment from every Participant, Sites Reservoir remains the most economical solution with the most opportunity for increasing affordability over time.

Collaboration

STATEWIDE

The Sites Project Authority is made up of local, state, and federal public agencies from across California. Together, we're working to increase our water supply resiliency while protecting and enhancing the environment.

COMMITTED

The Sites Project Authority holds firm in its dedication to deliver and honor commitments. The Sites Project Authority sets and upholds high standards that bring Sites Reservoir to reality as a unique, multi-benefit water storage project that provides a resilient and reliable water supply.

Opportunity

STABILITY

Sites Reservoir provides stability through long-term career opportunities. Local families have skilled labor/craft opportunities as they build prosperous careers while supporting their communities in return.

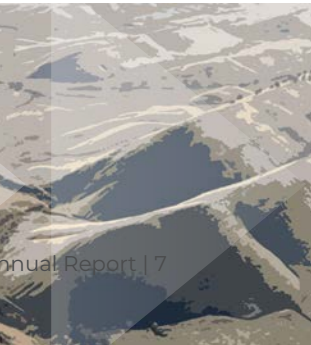
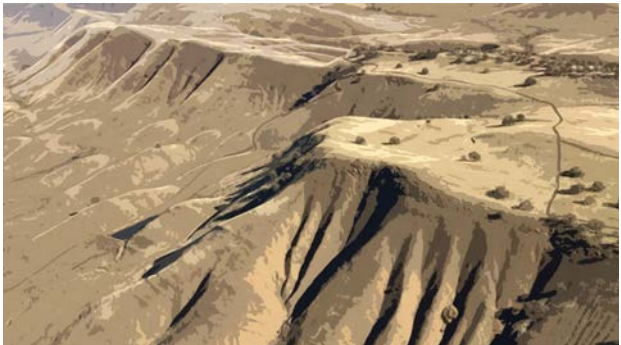
SECURITY

Water from Sites Reservoir is flexible and resilient to accommodate various interests and needs. Every Participant is in control of its share of water from Sites Reservoir and each chooses when and how to use the water asset they have stored in their dedicated storage space in Sites Reservoir.

As our changing climate continues to threaten our water supply, Sites Reservoir remains a vital tool for securing California's water future.

Cities, water agencies, and reclamation districts across the state are participating in Sites Reservoir because of the unique benefits it will provide:

- A reliable water supply for communities, farms, and the environment
- Dedicated environmental storage to support wildlife and their habitats
- Increased effectiveness of existing water infrastructure
- Recreational opportunities
- Job creation during construction and operations



HIGHLIGHTS AND MILESTONES

2024

We’ve made remarkable progress in the last few years and are entering the next phase of the Sites Reservoir Project. We will continue to accomplish our remaining strategic imperatives...together.



Permittable

Defended EIR litigation successfully

The Sites Project Authority cleared a major hurdle after courts rejected two legal challenges to the Sites Reservoir Project’s CEQA process and the certification of the Final EIR. **OUTCOME →** The Yolo County Superior Court and the Court of Appeals found that the Sites Project Authority fully complied with CEQA in its review of the Sites Reservoir Project. Without the Sites Reservoir Project’s certification under Senate Bill 149, the expediency of the Court’s decision could have been delayed by several years.

Secured incidental take permits for construction and operations

In collaboration with the CDFW, the Sites Project Authority secured key permits, including the Construction and Operations Incidental Take Permits. **OUTCOME →** The advancement of permitting elements provides additional certainty to Participants that the Sites Reservoir Project is on target to construction.

Continued the Water Right process

Through ongoing coordination with the State Water Resources Control Board, the Sites Project Authority is progressing through the water right hearing process. **OUTCOME →** The Sites Reservoir Project is on track to obtain its Water Right Order and Permit.



Effective Organization

Continued outreach and tours for partners and interested parties

Throughout 2024, the Sites Project Authority hosted Sites Reservoir Project tours for state, federal, and local partners that shared information about permitting, design, funding, and governmental interest. **OUTCOME →** The Sites Project Authority continues its commitment to transparent communication and keeping partners informed.

Informed potential Participants

The Sites Project Authority continues to receive requests from agencies throughout California to participate in the Sites Reservoir Project. Staff kept these 16 interested parties informed of progress. **OUTCOME →** The Sites Project Authority has broad statewide support from cities, counties, water agencies, and irrigation districts throughout the Sacramento Valley, San Joaquin Valley, Bay Area, and Southern California. All are working together to advance the Sites Reservoir Project.

Remained steady through state and federal leadership changes

The Sites Project Authority continues to work with all representatives at the local, state, and federal levels to make the Sites Reservoir Project a reality. **OUTCOME →** Ongoing collaboration with local leadership and governmental partners has allowed the Sites Reservoir Project to continue transparent and synchronized progression toward construction.



Buildable

Completed preliminary design for all facilities

The Sites Project Authority completed the preliminary design (approximately 30% design) for all Sites Reservoir Project facilities and published the design drawings on its website. **OUTCOME →** The Sites Project Authority is setting the stage to move from planning to delivery.

Conducted contractor outreach

In partnership with contractors throughout the nation, the Sites Project Authority hosted contractor outreach events in February, April, and September 2024 to inform the delivery strategy for the Sites Reservoir Project. **OUTCOME →** Routine outreach helps keep the contracting community informed as the Sites Reservoir Project moves closer to construction.



Affordable

Received additional federal funding

The Sites Project Authority secured an additional \$273.1M in federal appropriations—\$205.6M in March 2024 through the Water Infrastructure Improvements for the Nation (WIIN) Act and \$67.5M in May 2024 through the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act/ Bipartisan Infrastructure Law. **OUTCOME →** With the appropriation of these funds, the Sites Project Authority has received roughly \$517M in federal appropriations through 2024.

Progressed WIFIA Loan Agreement

Administered by the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), WIFIA is a federal loan program with a statutorily required review process. The Sites Project Authority continued collaboration with the EPA to develop the loan documents. **OUTCOME →** The Sites Project Authority remains committed to securing a WIFIA Loan to help reduce costs to Participants.

HIGHLIGHT OF THE YEAR: Initiated Property Acquisition

In collaboration with local landowners who are willing sellers, the Sites Project Authority entered into an agreement in October 2024 to purchase approximately 817 acres where the inlet/outlet tower, realigned Maxwell Sites Road, and several construction haul roads will be located.

The Sites Project Authority entered into a second property acquisition agreement in November 2024 to purchase approximately 1,200 acres where the Golden Gate Dam and associated facilities are located.



“This acquisition represents the first of many land acquisitions with local landowners to occur in the coming years to advance this much-needed project, decades in the making.”

— Fritz Durst,
Chair of the Sites Project
Authority Board of Directors

Remaining Steadfast

The Sites Reservoir Project remains viable and is poised to begin construction because of broad and diverse support across California.



2024 Costs, Funding, and Schedule

Cost Share
Since 2015 through December 31, 2024



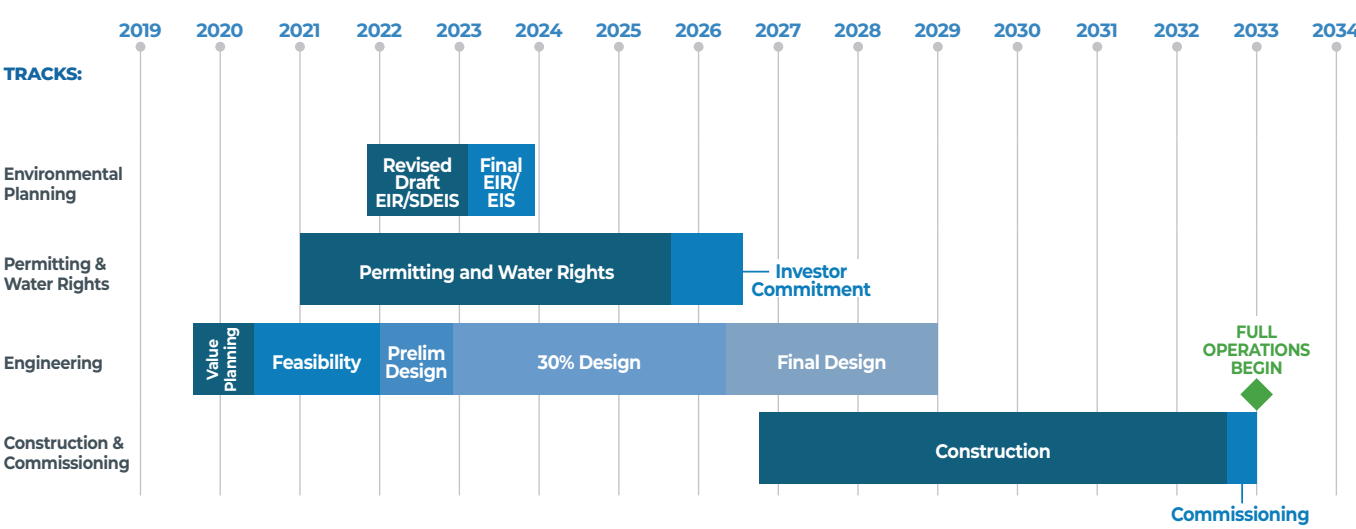
Roughly **\$155M** has been expended since 2015.

Approximate Sources and Uses of Funds

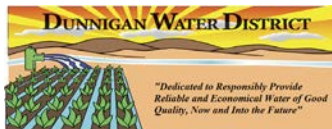
Source of Funds	
Membership Admin/ Authority	\$413,000
Membership Water	\$25,640,000
Proposition 1 Funding	\$1,136,000
WIIN Act Funding	\$9,068,000
Interest	\$1,701,000
TOTAL	\$37,958,000

Use of Funds	
Communications	\$447,000
Engineering	\$12,524,000
External Affairs	\$360,000
General Project Activities	\$267,000
Permitting	\$7,278,000
Planning	\$1,718,000
Program Operations	\$5,857,000
Real Estate	\$2,613,000
TOTAL	\$31,064,000

Sites Authority Project Schedule



Diverse Statewide Support for the Sites Reservoir Project



Colusa County Water District | Cortina Water District | Davis Water District
LaGrande Water District | Zone 3 – Colusa County Flood Control Water Conservation District



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